

VZCZCXRO4844
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #6901/01 3261707
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 221707Z NOV 05
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1427
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 6705
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 9118
REHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 0004
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 4941
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 4641
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1255
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/CDRUSAE IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39OSS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 ANKARA 006901

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Talabani Pays Surprise Visit to Tehran - Sabah
Zarkawi Allegedly Killed in Mosul - Sabah
Sharon Quits Likud, Will Found Liberal Party - Milliyet
Political Earthquake in Israel - Aksam
US, Mongolia to Become Strategic Partners - Turkiye
Bush Thanks Mongolia for Iraq Assistance - Milliyet
Bush Says Mongolia 'Just Like Texas' - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

Erdogan Given Cold Reception in Hakkari - Cumhuriyet
Erdogan Consoles Semdinli, Warns Against Supporting
Terrorism - Zaman
Murtha: 80 Percent of Iraqis Oppose US - Cumhuriyet
Biden: Civil Strife in Iraq Not in Turkey's Interests -
Cumhuriyet
Mahmud Osman: Bremer Wasted Kurds' Money - Radikal
Talabani First Iraqi President in Iran for 40 Years -
Cumhuriyet
US Troops Kill Entire Family in Bakuba - Radikal
Rumsfeld: Iraq Pullout Will Only Benefit Terrorists - Yeni
Safak
Bush Pays Visit to Genghis Khan's Descendants - Yeni Safak
Israel Prepares for Elections - Cumhuriyet
Sharon Leaves Likud; Israeli Parliament Dissolved - Yeni
Safak

US Vacates Uzbekistan Military Base - Yeni Safak
Bob Woodward Falls from Grace - Radikal
Non-Aligned Movement Unites against Western Media -
Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Erdogan Pays Visit to Southeast Turkey: Accompanied by his interior and justice ministers, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan rushed on Monday to the southeast province of Hakkari in an effort to address the ongoing unrest in the region. Tensions have escalated in Hakkari province since the November 9 bombing in the nearby town of Semdinli, in which two people died. The bombing has been widely blamed on members of Turkish security forces. Erdogan told a large crowd from the balcony of the governor's office in Hakkari that Turkey has been 'paying the cost of terrorism over the past three decades.' 'Terrorism has cost Turkey 40,000 victims over the past thirty years. Killing people will not yield any results,' Erdogan stressed, warning that terrorists will try to break up the country if the Turkish people cannot manage to live in peace. Erdogan noted that his government opposes all forms of ethnic, regional, and religious nationalism, and said that people should live as citizens of the Republic of Turkey regardless of their ethnicity. Erdogan underlined that the incidents which occurred several days ago in the region are 'under close scrutiny' by his government. 'Let us close this period of hatred. All must know that if there is wrongdoing, we will investigate it. We must join hands with you,' he said. The PM later moved on to Semdinli and visited 67 houses and shops that were destroyed in a bombing on November 1. Two

ANKARA 00006901 002 OF 004

were killed and 23 wounded in that blast. Dailies comment that Erdogan was given a 'cold reception' in Semdinli, where he was greeted with placards condemning the involvement of state officials in the bombings. In Yuksekova, Erdogan held a meeting with local leaders and NGOs. Erdogan told a group of 2,000 people who were shouting slogans demanding the resignation of the provincial governor that 'solidarity' is needed to solve the region's problems. "Zaman" comments that the PM's 'sudden' visit 12 days after the bombings has revived hopes in the region that the perpetrators of the November 9 bombing will be found. "Zaman" says that local people agree that Erdogan is the leader with the greatest potential to bring a solution to the problem. Papers speculate that Erdogan's visit had not been announced beforehand in order to prevent organized protests.

PKK Defector: 500 Informants Work for Jandarma: "Zaman" carries a story from the weekly political magazine "Aksiyon" claiming that as many as 500 PKK defectors now work for jandarma intelligence (JITEM). An informant code-named Firat said the PKK is not sincere in its stated goal of expanding 'Kurdish rights.' 'I worked for long years for the PKK. Their only goal is to partition the country. We have sided with the state to protect Turkey. To me, murders and bombings are an effort to intimidate. They are necessary for the sake of the state. Nobody is killed people for nothing,' Firat said.

Pro-Kurdish Demonstration in Mersin: Tensions rose in Turkey's Mediterranean city of Mersin Monday following the funeral of Murat Demir, a Kurdish demonstrator killed during a rally to protest against the Semdinli incident, papers report. A group of some 1,000 protestors carrying PKK flags pelted police with rocks on the streets of Mersin, and damaged cars and shops. Police used tear gas to break up the protest.

Plastic Explosives Seized in Mersin: In security operations conducted in Mersin on Monday, police detained 2 suspects and seized 11 kilograms of A-4 plastic explosives and electronic circuits used in bomb-making. Police declined to

elaborate on the operation.

US Denies Pressure Urging Denmark to Ban Roj TV: US State Department spokesmen Sean MacCormack and Adam Ereli denied Danish media reports that the US had put pressure on Denmark to close Roj-TV, the pro-Kurdish broadcaster believed to have ties to the outlawed PKK, the Cihan News Agency reported on Tuesday. The two spokesmen stressed that the US has listed the PKK as a terror organization and that the fight against the PKK is a 'continuing factor of US foreign policy.' Prime Minister Erdogan last week walked out of a joint press conference with Danish PM Rasmussen in Copenhagen to protest the presence of Roj-TV in the briefing room.

Biden Opposes Premature Iraq Pullout: US Senator Joseph Biden said in response Congressman John Murtha's proposal for an immediate withdrawal of US troops from Iraq that a premature pullout in the next six months would be 'a great mistake,' Turkish papers report. Biden advised the US Administration to do 'what it did in Afghanistan,' and call in the regional and international powers in Iraq. 'We need a regional strategy that persuades Iraq's neighbors to wield their influence with the Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds for political compromise. They will do it, because no one other than the terrorists has an interest in Iraq's descent into civil war. Grounds for a settlement must be created, and reconstruction must begin from that point,' Biden said.

ANKARA 00006901 003 OF 004

TNA: Ankara-Barzani Seek New Ties: A column in the English-language daily "The New Anatolian" (TNA) claims that Massoud Barzani, regional president of Iraqi Kurdistan, held a meeting with a top-level official from the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) before the Kurdish leader flew to Washington late last month to meet President Bush at the White House. The meeting aimed to establish a new dialogue between Ankara and the Barzani administration. The US and UK have told Barzani to tone down his Kurdish nationalist rhetoric on the Kirkuk issue in order not to offend Turkey. Turkey claims that the Kurds are trying to change the demography of Kirkuk to the disadvantage of the Turkmen living in the city. Kurds say the province should be a part of the Kurdistan federal entity. They want a referendum for the people of Kirkuk to decide the future of the province. The new constitution stipulates that such a referendum should be held by 2007. The US and UK are urging the Iraqi Kurds to at least contain the PKK and not allow PKK militants free movement in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. The Kurds say an independent Kurdistan is a 'dream' for them but stress that both in practical and political terms, it is impossible to achieve. Turkey views the Kurdish leaders as 'a reality of Iraqi politics,' and understand that the Kurdistan region has become a legitimate entity under international law. Ankara is seeking a new approach on the issue, and wants to turn a new page with the Kurds, the column claims.

EU Delays Financial Aid to North Cyprus until December: The foreign ministers of European Union member countries discussed the issue of financial aid to Turkish Cypriots in Brussels yesterday. Following the April 24, 2004 referendum on the island, the European Commission prepared a financial aid package of 259 million USD and proposed direct trade between the north and EU member countries. However, these proposals were rejected because of Greek Cypriot objections. 120 million USD of the initial aid package will be lost if the proposal is not approved by the end of the year.

RSF Criticizes Turkish Court Decision against Journalist: The Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) criticized a decision by Turkey's Supreme Court upholding a 20-month suspended prison sentence against Burak Bekdil, editor of the English-language "Turkish Daily News" (TDN) for 'insulting state institutions.' Bekdil was sentenced after

the paper carried a column on August 27, 2001 exposing the failings and inconsistencies of the Turkish legal system. Bekdil will face a full jail term if he repeats the offence between now and July 2007. 'An ordinary Turk has a one in a million chance for a fair trial if he is foolish enough to trust Turkish courts and judges,' Bekdil wrote in his column. RSF said that the sentence 'shows again the flaws in the new Turkish criminal code that allow the authorities to suppress media by using vague formulations according to whim. Such practices are utterly inconsistent with the norms of free expression within the European Union,' the RSF said. Bekdil's lawyer has decided to appeal the verdict to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

EDITORIAL OPINION: Israel; US-Turkey-Iraq

"The Surprise Move from Sharon"

Sami Kohen argued in the mainstream "Milliyet" (11/22): "The most recent developments in Israel are like a political tremor. This tremor will not only change the political equilibrium of the region but also will have some after-shocks, which could have the effect of putting things in

ANKARA 00006901 004 OF 004

order. Opinion polls indicate that the Likud party as it becomes more extreme is losing strength, and Sharon's brand new center-right party is expected to take the lead against Likud. But Perez's Labor Party is expected to emerge as the strongest force. In any case, after the elections a center-left coalition with Sharon and Perez is the most likely scenario. An Israeli government of this kind will likely be helpful for the Middle East peace process. If the upcoming Palestinian elections in January result in some positive developments, we might be talking about a 'Middle East Spring' after the month of March."

"Observation in the US"

Cuneyt Ulsever observed in the mass appeal "Hurriyet" (11/22): "After meeting some people in Washington D.C., my observation is that there is a division in the Bush administration regarding its Turkey policy. The State Department sees a considerable improvement in Turkish-American ties since June, while the Pentagon largely believes that the AKP government is a 'lost cause' as far as US policy for the Middle East is concerned. In addition, the neo-cons in the Bush administration seem to be lost in current events and don't know what to do. Even Republicans are showing support for the Democratic efforts to leave Iraq's security to the Iraqis in 2006. Nobody takes the Greater Middle East project seriously anymore. American officials were annoyed by the sudden visit of Turkish Foreign Minister Gul to Damascus."

"Once the Beads Scatter Around."

Haluk Ulman wrote in the economic-political "Dunya" (11/22): "The US occupation of Iraq not only pulled the country into a circle of violence but also started affecting the stability and the political future of the countries in the region. It seems that, because of the policies of Bush and his team, the post-occupation Middle East is going to be very different than the pre-occupation Middle East. The beads have already been scattered around; only God knows what kind of picture will come out after they are re-strung. Despite all the efforts of the US, stability has not been established in Iraq. Iraq has been divided between the Kurds and the Shiites. The Sunnis, angered by this division, continue the insurgency with bloody terror attacks. Over 2,200 American soldiers have lost their lives in Iraq and countless civilian lives have been lost as well. Iraqi President Talabani stresses that the establishment of an independent Kurdish State in Iraq is not possible. But Barzani says he will announce the region's independence if there is a civil war in Iraq. Whether a civil war erupts or not, Barzani is determined to establish an independent Kurdish state in the region. In fact, this is the only hope

for the US to remain in the Middle East, particularly after the failure in Iraq."

MCELDOWNEY